Cotton/Soybean Insect Newsletter

Volume 16, Issue #19 Edisto Research & Education Center in Blackville, SC 3 September 2021

Pest Patrol Alerts

The information contained herein each issue is available via text alerts that direct users to online recordings. I will update the short message often for at least as long as the newsletter runs. After a new message is posted, a text message is sent to alert users that I have recorded a new update. Users can subscribe for text message alerts for my updates in two easy steps. Step one: register by texting **pestpat7** to 97063. Step two: reply to the confirmation text you receive by texting the letter "y" to complete your registration. Pest Patrol Alerts are sponsored by Syngenta.

Updates on Twitter

When noteworthy events happen the in the field, I will be sending them out quickly via Twitter. If you want to follow those quick updates, follow me at **@bugdocisin** on Twitter.

News from Around the State

Charles Davis, county agent in Calhoun County, stated that "a lot of our cotton is bloomed out the top. Some final insect treatments are going out." **Jay Crouch**, county agent in Newberry County, reported yesterday that he "just got out of a field in Lexington County that had a treatable level of VBC. Otherwise, fungicide/insecticide sprays are continuing to go out." **Chris Talley**, county agent in Oconee County, reported that he is "seeing a few worms on soybeans (green cloverworms, soybean loopers, and velvetbean caterpillars) but nothing severe as of yet. Everything has been well below threshold levels, but I'm keeping an eye on them, especially VBC." **Tom Smith**, a local crop consultant, reported for cotton he's observed many species from the sucking bug complex, including various species of brown (pictured) and green stink bugs and leaf-footed bugs (mating pair pictured here).

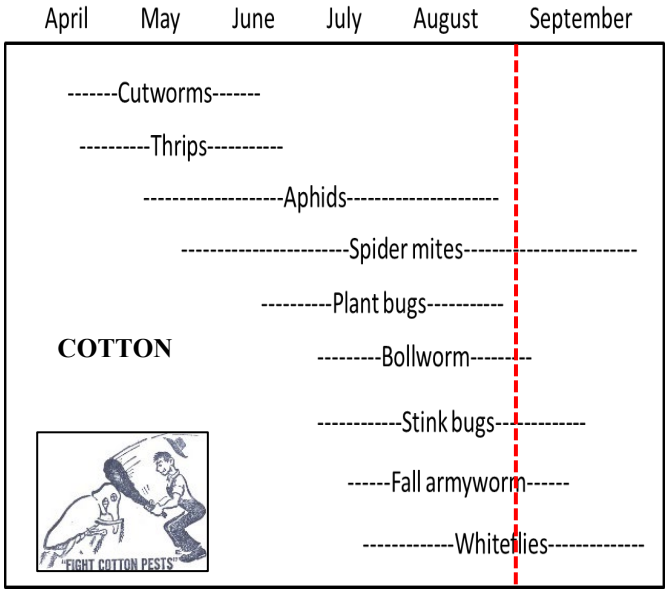
Upcoming Field Day (CANCELED)

After much discussion and careful consideration for the health and wellbeing of the public, Clemson University has decided to cancel the 2021 Edisto REC Peanut, Horticulture, and Agronomic Crop Field Day planned for September 16th. We look forward to resuming this field day in 2022. We will develop a publication which will include the information that was to be presented at this Field Day. You will receive a follow up notification when that publication is ready for viewing and a link to access it. Thank you for your continued interest and support of the programs at Edisto REC.

Cotton Situation

As of 29 August 2021, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office estimated that about 97% of the crop is setting bolls, compared with 96% last week, 86% at this time last year, and 94% for the 5-year average. About 12% of bolls are opening, compared with 2% last week, 4% at this time last year, and 18% for the 5-year average. The conditions of the crop were 14% excellent, 60% good, 26% fair, 0% poor, and 0% very poor. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

Cotton Insects

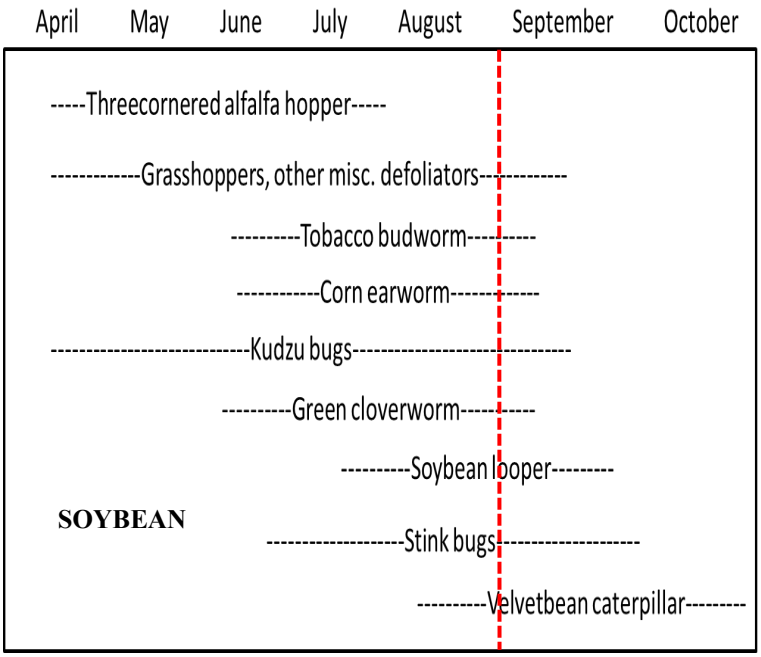


We are still finding bollworm larvae in squares and bolls of cotton planted during mid-May and mid-June in a planting date study using non-Bt cotton. Also, captures of bollworm moths in my pheromone traps increased again this past week, but I still think most cotton is safe from additional significant injury from bollworm, unless it was planted very late and only has two Bt genes. So, the bollworm season in cotton is officially over, in my opinion.

Stink bugs are a different issue. We have moderate-to-high pressure from multiple species of stink bugs, and there is much reproduction going on right now. I have recently observed brown stink bug, green stink bug, southern green stink bug (SGSB), brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB), and other species. The BMSB is a fairly new one for us here in the Coastal Plain of South Carolina. The species orginally invaded the USA in the northeastern states and has been slowly expanding its distribution to the South. The species is well-established in the Upstate, Piedmont, and across the state diagonally (BMSB seems to be most established north of I-20), and this year is the first time I have observed significant reproduction in the Coastal Plain region in our state. The BMSB is very reproductively capable…much like SGSB. Thankfully, it is also susceptible to many insecticides…just like SGSB. Producers following the dynamic boll-injury threshold will control all species and preserve yield. I can see the light at the end of the tunnel for this cotton crop. We should have a great crop because of the frequent rains and the great job all of you did, I'm sure!

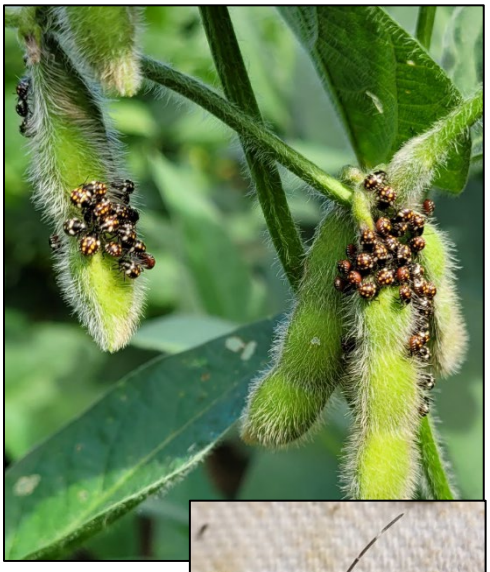
Soybean Situation

As of 29 August 2021, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office estimated that about 91% of the crop has bloomed, compared with 84% the previous week, 85% at this time last year, and 90% for the 5-year average. About 55% of the crop is setting pods, compared with 43% the previous week, 54% at this time last year, and 57% for the 5-year average. The conditions of the crop were 19% excellent, 67% good, 14% fair, 0% poor, and 0% very poor. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

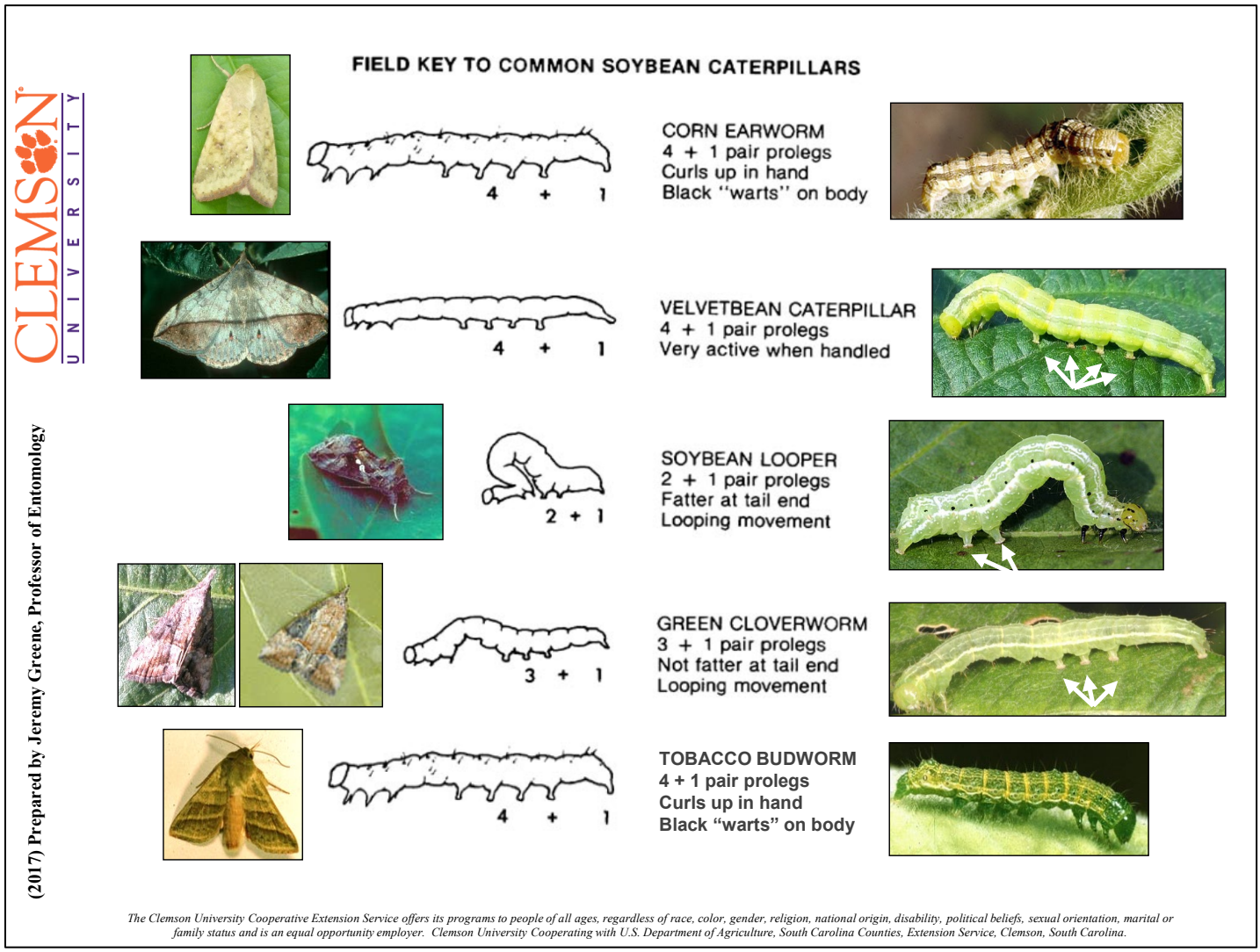


Soybean Insects

The defoliating complex of caterpillars still includes soybean looper (SBL), velvetbean caterpillar (VBC), and some green cloverworm. There are also still plenty of grasshoppers eating leaves as well. So, watch defoliation and treat accordingly, but, once you have reached a defoliation threshold, it can be difficult to determine if another pest is causing additional defoliation. The holes in the leaves remain and are not reset for you for each wave of caterpillar pest. That is why it is important to put boots on the ground and check your soybeans weekly. You can catch the problem much sooner by seeing the small insects in the field than waiting to watch defolation from the truck window riding by fields. You will often be too late, if you just look at defoliation from a distance. You will also miss out on seed and stem feeders. Stink bugs are very numerous in soybeans right now. I have some untreated soybeans at R5.5, and multiple species of stink bugs are out of control in the test area. The species include reproducing populations of southern green stink bug, brown marmorated stink bug, redbanded stink bugs, and others hemipterans.



As moth activity increases, deposited eggs will yield caterpillar pests on soybeans. It is good skill to be able to identify adult moths flying around in fields. Use this chart to study moth and caterpillar identification.



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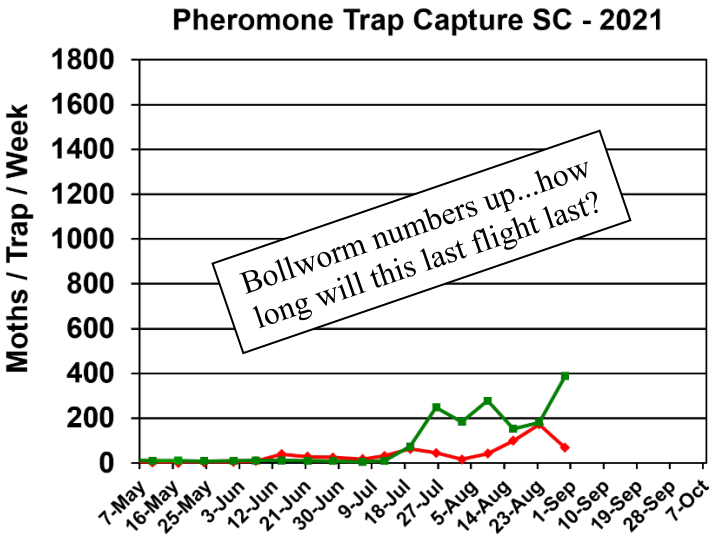
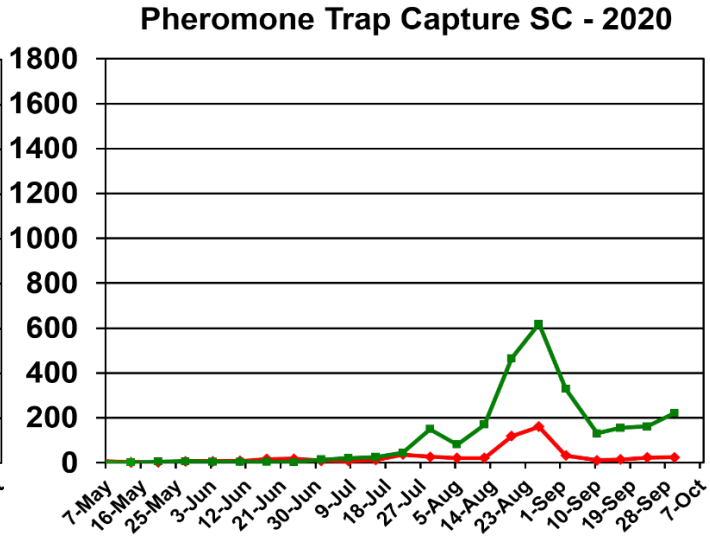
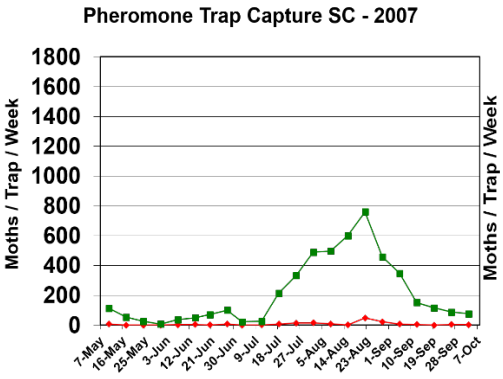
Bollworm & Tobacco Budworm

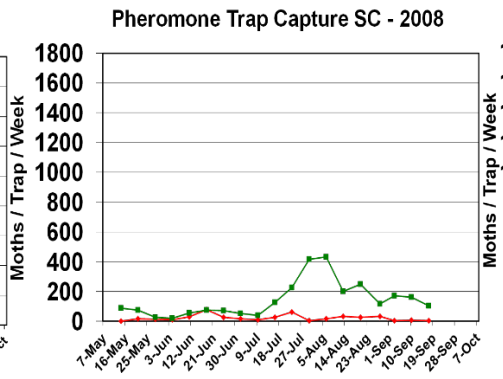
Captures of bollworm (BW) and tobacco budworm (TBW) moths in pheromone traps at EREC this season are shown below, as are the captures from 2007-2020 for reference. Tobacco budworm continues to be important for our soybean acres and for any acres of non-Bt cotton. I provide these data as a measure of moth presence and activity in our local area near my research plots. The numbers are not necessarily representative of the species throughout the state but are useful for general trends.

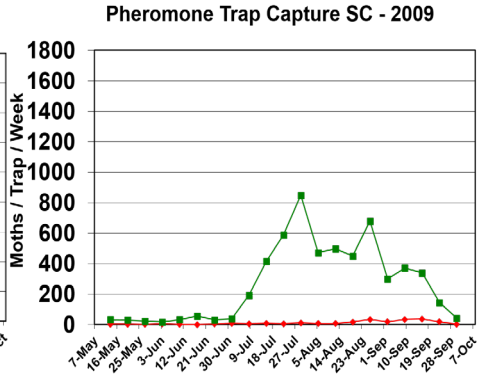




Trap data from 2007-2019 are shown below for reference to other years of trapping data from EREC:







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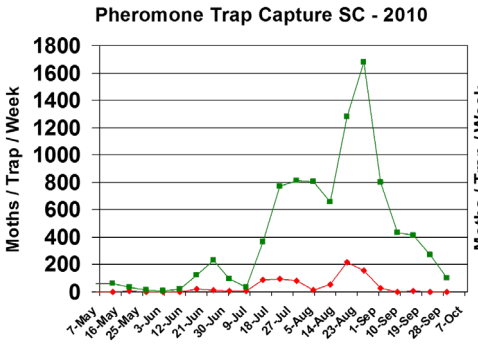

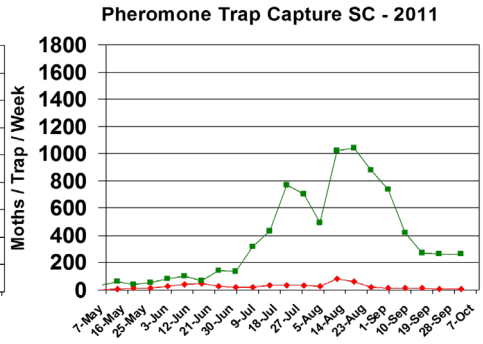

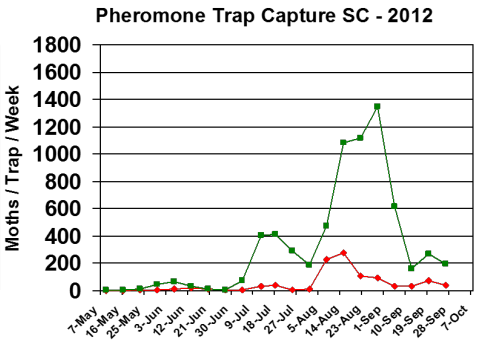

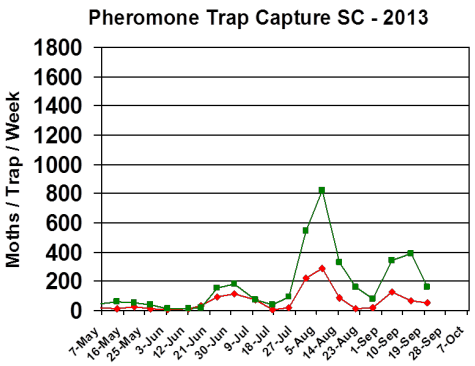

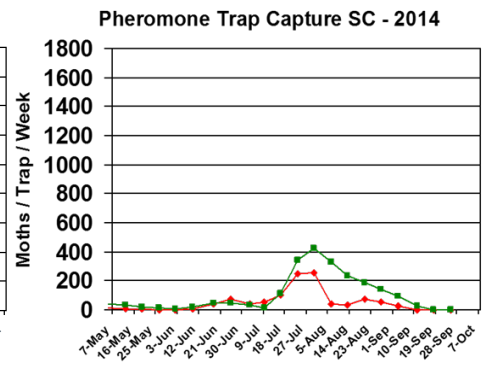

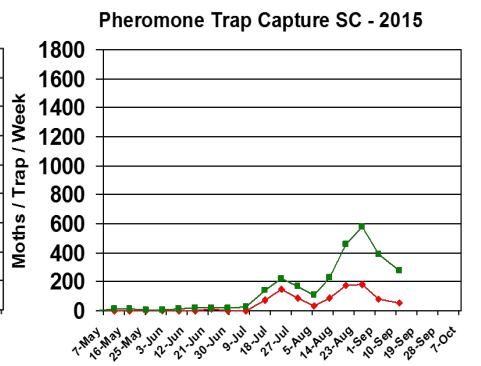

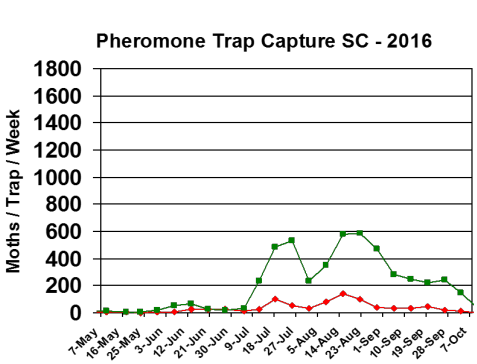

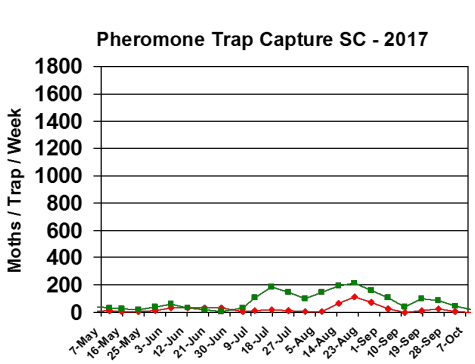

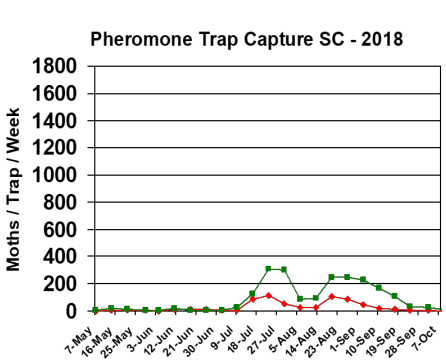

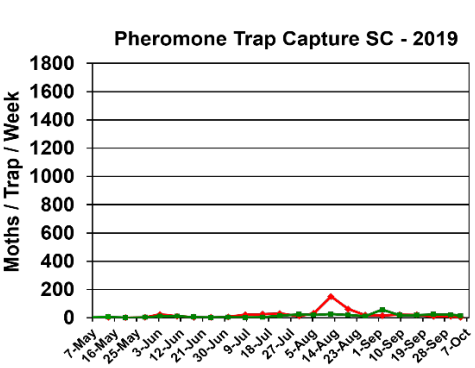

Pest Management Handbook – 2021

Insect control recommendations are available online in the 2021 South Carolina Pest Management Handbook at:
https://www.clemson.edu/extension/agronomy/pest%20management%20handbook.html

South Carolina Crops Blog

The SC Crops Blog contains content about production of major row crops at the following link, if you want more information: https://blogs.clemson.edu/sccrops/
Archived issues of the Cotton/Soybean Insect Newsletter can be viewed at a convenient link on the SCCrops page. Contact **Dr. Michael Plumblee**, if you have any questions about the blog.

Free Mobile Apps: "Calibrate My Sprayer" and "Mix My Sprayer"

Download our free mobile apps called "Calibrate My Sprayer" and "Mix My Sprayer" that help check for proper calibration of spraying equipment and help you with mixing user-defined pesticides, respectively, in custom units (available in both iOS and Android formats):
http://www.clemson.edu/extension/mobile-apps/

Need More Information?

For more Clemson University Extension information: http://www.clemson.edu/extension/

For historical cotton/soybean insect newsletters:
https://www.clemson.edu/extension/agronomy/cotton1/newsletters.html

Sincerely,

Jeremy K. Greene, Ph.D.
Professor of Entomology

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